



Human Services Committee,
Public Hearing, February 28, 2023

To: Honorable Senator Lesser and Representative Gilchrest; and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee.

Testimony of Fairfield Senior Advocates (FSA) in SUPPORT of:

HB 6775 AN ACT CONCERNING MANDATED REPORTERS.

I submit this testimony on behalf of the Fairfield Senior Advocates, an all-volunteer, non-partisan advocacy group for seniors dedicated to protect, retain and improve the quality of life for seniors in our state.

We support inclusion of additional individuals - who by their professions may have frequent contact with seniors - as mandated reporters. The Department of Social Services (DSS) identified these professions to be in unique positions to identify elder abuse.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) reports that at least 10% of adults aged 65 and older will experience some form of elder abuse. Other studies indicate this to be understated - with only one in 24 cases actually reported; financial abuse is the most highly reported form. Moreover, up to 50% of seniors with dementia are said to experience abuse.

The DOJ also reports that the trauma of elder abuse may result in: health deterioration, hospitalization and increased mortality; clinical issues such as depression and suicide; social issues such as disrupted relationships; financial loss. All of these lead to diminished independence and quality of life.

It is an overriding civic duty to protect our vulnerable senior citizens from abuse. Having additional mandated reporters trained to identify and report warning signs will further protect our vulnerable seniors. HB 6775 will provide an additional layer of needed protection.

We concur with the Department of Social Services and respectfully request the Human Services Committee support HB 6775.

Thank you for your service to our state and for consideration of our position.

Sincerely,
William Lenahan, Fairfield, CT – Fairfield Senior Advocates